

STAR WARS
REBELLION

"OPERATION: WHATEVER"

by

Michael Kirkbride

STAR WARS: REBELLION
"Operation: Whatever"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - NEAR KESSEL

PAN ACROSS the vastness of space to the bone-white prison planet of Kessel. Its surface is riddled with craters and the desolate salt flats between. Imperial Bulk Cruisers regulate the orbital traffic with their TIE Patrols. Massive Spice-Haulers and Cargo-Freighters sit delayed in the spacelanes, while other spacecraft descend.

SPICE CAPTAIN (V.O.)

Ya know, you'd think with Kessel being such a premium commodity to the Empire, you Imp cruisers might go the extra parsec to get orbital traffic moving a little faster.

BULK CRUISER CAPTAIN ONE (V.O.)

The extra parsec you're missing is called my kickback, Captain. I've told you that before, but you're always too busy worrying about the Hutts catching you shave off your end of their spice loads to hear me. Now get back in line.

BULK CRUISER CAPTAIN TWO (V.O.)

I've got a meteor impact on mark 327, around the crater belt. Who wants it?

CARGO-FREIGHTER CAPTAIN (V.O. - garbled)
Captain Vir-

(crackling)

-of the Cargo *Strommel* here. We'll-

(more distortion)

--already on our way if we're talking
standard share of salvage rights he-

The last end of the Cargo Freighter Captain's
transmission FIZZLES OUT.

BULK CRUISER CAPTAIN TWO (V.O.)

Heh, sure, *Strommel*. Might I suggest
you use your share to get that
buttertub a new transceiver?

EXT. SURFACE OF KESSEL - SALT FLATS - INDETERMINATE TIME

On the inhospitable surface of Kessel, a band of masked scavengers marches through a wild saltstorm. The CARGO CAPTAIN is at the head of the scavengers, wearing black wrap-arounds, an oxygen mask, and a full-body hazard suit, like the rest of his crew. They carry cruel-looking rifles, with a glow rod beneath the barrels. The dusty haze of the saltstorm is crisscrossed with the lights of their glow rods. A Bantha MOANS, wearing an oversized breath mask and eye shields, as it ambles along in the stinging plains of sand and salt. The creature carries several packs of cargo across its saddle. THE BANTHA DRIVER, higher than the rest, points ahead. The scavenger party comes to a ridge and overlooks a massive atmosphere factory. A SMALL SCAVENGER pulls a pair of macrobinoculars off of the Bantha and climbs back up the ridge.

MACROBINOCULARS POV: the atmosphere factory is a trio of towering power regulators. Covered repulsor sleds move from one tower to the other. TRACKING OVER to beyond the factory WE SEE the gaping hole of an Imperial Spice Mine, a blackness that descends far into the planet's crust. Several surface structures surround the open maw of the spice mine: prison factories.

BACK to the ridge, the Cargo Captain looks over to the Small Scavenger. Over the ROARING STORM, they have to speak into their wrist comlinks.

CARGO CAPTAIN
(distorted)

Whatcha got?

SMALL SCAVENGER
(distorted)

It's the right one. Security looks tight.

CARGO CAPTAIN
(distorted)

Call up the atmosphere factory and tell them we're bringing in the meteor salvage.

The Small Scavenger keys into another comlink channel.

SMALL SCAVENGER
(distorted)

Strommel here. We found some ore under the alkali.

ATMOSPHERE FACTORY OFFICER (V.O.)
Bring it in. Not worth much, but you should get out of that salt storm anyway.

CARGO CAPTAIN
(distorted)

We'll be there shortly. When's this storm supposed to end? I had to land my freighter on the outskirts.

The Cargo Captain waits for an answer, but all he gets is STATIC. The scavengers and their Bantha move down the ridge.

EXT. KESSEL ATMOSPHERE FACTORY - INDETERMINATE TIME

The scavenger party makes it to the windswept landing bays of the Atmosphere Factory. Gigantic fans do their best to keep the metal floor of the bay free of the salt. A covered repulsor sled approaches the Cargo Captain and his crew. AN IMPERIAL ARMY OFFICER, in a black poncho, goggles, and breath mask, jumps out from the sled and greets the Cargo Captain.

The Imperial Army Officer looks up as the Bantha is led past him, SNORTING salt out of its hidden nostrils.

IMPERIAL ARMY OFFICER

Cargo bay eight, Captain. Follow my troops.

Stormtroopers jump out of the sled as it pulls away. They are dressed in Imperial-issue snowgear that's been refitted for the saltstorms of Kessel. One motions with his blaster rifle for the Bantha Driver to follow him.

INT. FACTORY CARGO BAY EIGHT - INDETERMINATE TIME

The Imperials and the scavengers stand in a high-ceilinged pressure cavity, waiting for the slow GRINDING blast doors to come down. Another set of exit blast doors waits on the opposite end of the cargo bay, leading into the rest of the facility. The Bantha shakes its bulk, trying to get the grit out of its fur. The Bantha Driver pats it on the head, scratching it behind its large spiral horns.

ON THE BANTHA DRIVER'S HAND as he pats the beast on the head again. When his hand moves away, a small BLINKING disc is situated in the nest of its shaggy head.

BACK to the Cargo Captain as he hands a security card to a stormtrooper, who moves to a nearby command console.

The Small Scavenger lugs a huge cargo sack off the Bantha's saddle. Her fellow scavengers help her with the rest. The first set of blast doors shut and the winds outside become muffled. The chamber becomes very dim. Other stormtroopers move to the exit blast doors and begin to open them. Their boots suddenly ECHO on the hard metal surface of the Cargo Bay.

The stormtrooper checking the Cargo Captain's security license waits for the command console to clear it. The Imperial Army Officer pulls off his oxygen mask and takes a deep breath, smiling at the Cargo Captain, who nods in return.

No one notices the scavengers pulling their cargo out of the saddle packs in the corner.

The Small Scavenger snaps two segments of a K-5 Combat Droid's laser cannon arm together. Two other scavengers hold up the droid's torso and head, its other arm already attached. With a SMALL CLICK the Combat Droid's upper half is already complete.

The command console SPARKS WILDLY and begins to smoke. The Imperial Officer looks from the stormtrooper to the Cargo Captain, raising his hand to his holster.

CARGO CAPTAIN

(distorted)

Must be the grit from all that salt.

Sorry about that.

(pulling out another security card)

Try this one.

As the stormtrooper reaches for the new card, a lightsaber ignites from the back of Cargo Captain's hazard suit sleeve. The saber spears into the chest of the stormtrooper. The trooper's blaster CLATTERS to the floor.

The Imperial Army Officer lifts his blaster pistol to fire, but the Bantha Driver blasts him from above. The other stormtroopers turn around from the exit blast doors and lift their laser rifles. The Combat Droid, Two-Tau, rising to his feet, opens fire with his WHINING twin laser cannons, gunning them all down. The Bantha Driver pulls off his mask: Hulda Caulp. Hulda pats the BLINKING disc on the Bantha's head.

HULDA CAULP

They're jammed, Shen.

Endigo pulls off the Cargo Captain's mask and SWITCHES HIS LIGHTSABER OFF. He then pulls off his hazard suit jacket, exposing his two cybernetic arms. He lifts a metal hand to his transceiver ear.

ENDIGO

Mede, Endigo here. We're in the compound, just outside of the prison factories.

Bre, the Small Scavenger, steps over the stormtrooper in front of Shen. She goes to the command console and inserts a datapad cord. She reads a second.

BRE

Our man's currently on duty in the
Spice Mine correctional facility. Level
eight. No, level nine.

Hulda jumps down from the Bantha and pulls out his own
datapad. A display of the Cargo Freighter *Strommel* appears.

HULDA CAULP

(into the datapad's comlink)
Skatuhl, read this position and give us
half an hour.

SKATUHL (V.O.)

Feetchu.

The rest of the Rebel Commando team has removed their
scavenger gear and taken up positions around the blast
doors.

ENDIGO

(to Bre)

Let's go.

(to Hulda)

Keep us informed.

Endigo, Bre, and Two-Tau exit, heading deeper into the
Atmosphere Factory.

The rest of the team remains behind.

EXT. SPACE - KESSEL SYSTEM - OUT OF RANGE OF IMPERIAL
SENSORS

The Star Destroyer *Atonement* drifts on the periphery of
Kessel sensor range, the *Refugee-One* docked with it.

DESTRI (V.O.)

They're in, Admiral.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - BRIDGE

Destri and Mede stand on the bridge of the Star Destroyer
Atonement, looking at a vidscreen of the operation.

The layout of the Spice Mine correctional facility CLICKS and ZOOMS to reveal labor level nine.

DESTRI (CONT'D)

Is this guy worth it?

MEDE

The Alliance seems to think so.

DESTRI

But why did you volunteer us? Katarn's mercenaries work out here. They can be trusted.

MEDE

Katarn's mercenaries performed sublimely, Captain. Do you know how difficult it is to deviate the course of a meteor to the center of our Kessel operation? Besides, I have a vested interest in the prisoner in question, Captain Destri.

Destri pulls up a graphical profile on HALLON NAIN, human male. A long list scrolls alongside Nain's image.

DESTRI

A spice runner?

MEDE

Yes.

DESTRI

Not to mention everything else on his criminal record.

MEDE

We're criminals, Destri. And Hallon Nain knows bigger, better criminals. Of the kind the Rebellion wants to get in contact with.

DESTRI

So that's General Madine's reason. What's yours? Sir.

MEDE

I sent Hallon Nain to Kessel.

DESTRI

If this is you wanting to make up for something you did while serving the Emperor, then--

MEDE

He deserved his punishment. He still does. But he's also married to my daughter, Captain. And he knows where she is.

EXT. HUTT SPACE - NEAR NAR SHADAA AND NAL HUTTA

Frigates, pleasure yachts, tramp freighters, and Corellian starships surround the space port moon of Nar Shadaa, which orbits Nal Hutta, the glorious jewel of Hutt Space.

A Combine Cruiser enters a spiral-designed stardock of the TGM (TransGalMeg) Corporation.

INT. TGM CORP. STARDOCK

PLOOVO-TWO-FOR-ONE, gaudily dressed and decorated, mid-level boss of the galaxy's criminal underworld, is escorted by Combine Soldiers to the grand and golden lobby of the TGM Stardock.

Flanked by alien bodyguards of all types, AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT waits sprawled on a massive, cushioned hovercouch.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT

(holding his arms wide)

Una det chesko Ploovo-Two-For-One!

Ploovo bows. He looks up at a Combine Soldier, who gives him an evil stare.

PLOOVO

Greetings, great one, Ah-Kibosh. The Combine wants my head, you know. Why would you do this to me?

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
(laughing)
Shuda, Ploovo. Doh mehtra rah.

PLOOVO
That's exactly my point, Ah-Kibosh.
I thought I did know you. Now you're
charging twice what I promised Mon
Gallofree for the glitterstim spice.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
Nohn mayah yoka, Ploovo. Spoketa Mon
Gallofree Ah-Kibosh shunamehtra. Two-
FOR-one, ho ha.

PLOOVA
Don't make me tell him that. Please.
The Autarch doesn't want anything but
the spice. And at the price we agreed
on.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
(laughing again)
Ploovo. Shunamehtra bo shoon! Nal raht
Kessel.
(slowly)
Endigo.

At the sound of the name, Ploovo SIGHS HEAVILY IN RELIEF.
Then he smiles. He looks to the Combine Soldier that glared
at him and gives him a glare of his own. Ploovo looks back
at the Hutt.

They LAUGH together as he heads back to the Combine
Cruiser.

INT. KESSEL ATMOSPHERE FACTORY - INDETERMINATE TIME

Endigo, Bre, and Two-Tau are sneaking through a wide
ventilation shaft, a fan WHIRLING up ahead of them, cutting
them off from the rest of the facility.

BRE
We're there.

ENDIGO
Hulda. Kill the fan.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE CORUSCANT - ON SKIPRAY BLASTBOAT

as it flies into the crowded spacelanes orbiting of Coruscant, central system of the Galactic Empire.

PAN TO a clear field in the spacelanes, where the Skyhook space platform of Mon Gallofree, Autarch of the Combine, sits in geosynchronous orbit above the capital of the Empire. The Skyhook is an immense satellite station, magnificently sculpted by its engineers, a glass and metal star. The station is tethered to Coruscant by a long and fragile-looking umbilicalift cord. The Autarch's Skyhook is emblazoned with logos of the TGM INDUSTRIES, INC., the Combine's legitimate front company.

INT. MON GALLOFREE'S SKYHOOK - THRONE ROOM

Mon Gallofree's throne room isn't as impressive as the outside of the Skyhook. Though it's still situated beneath a beautiful geodesic dome of glass and gold lattice frames, the throne room floor is littered with tables, workbenches, droid parts, and all manner of engineering equipment. Grease and scorch marks are everywhere.

MON GALLOFREE, royalty though none would know it by his rugged dress and rough demeanor, is busy soldering parts together for a tracked war machine. He wears a blastshield helmet because of the bright light of the soldering torch.

Two pit droids are helping him, one holding the war machine's turret in place, and the other holding a cold drink.

Gallofree's assistant, SNAG, a monkey-like Yuzzem, sits on the Autarch's throne, legs dangling off one armrest. Next to Snag is a Twi'lek girl caught in a glitterstim haze, leaning against the side of the throne. They both stare at a gilded vidscreen (oddly delicate in the rest of this shamble) hovering before them. An image FLICKERS onto the vidscreen: Ploovo-Two-For-One.

SNAG

Yuzza, Ploovo. Mon Gal already said he don't wanna talk to you when he's so busy, right?

PLOOVO

(re: Twi'lek girl)

What's wrong with her?

SNAG

(giving her a sidelong glance)

She's accidentally shaped like a snake.

(beat)

I mean, she thinks she is. That's what I see anyway. Spice only gives you the surface.

PLOOVO

Lemme talk to the Autarch, Snag.

SNAG

(sighing)

Told you. Making something. He already said go ahead. Give your Hutt whatever.

Mon Gallofree comes over, tossing his helmet to a pit droid. He wipes his hands on a washcloth. He sits on the step in front of Snag and lights a pipe, looking at Ploovo disapprovingly.

PLOOVO

I'm still at Nar Shadaa, your lordship. You've read my reports and are fine with the deal, am I correct? I know how much you want Shen Endigo.

MON GALLOFREE

Where is he?

PLOOVO

He's on Kessel, trying to break someone out of the Spice Mines. He's working for the Rebellion now, it--

MON GALLOFREE

Knew that already. He's with Mede.

PLOOVO

Anyway, they're after a... Hallon Nain, one of the Hutts' best spice runners.

MON GALLOFREE

Why would the Rebel Alliance be cooperating with Nar Shadaa?

PLOOVO

Ah-Kibosh didn't get into the details. All I know is that someone named Madine--

MON GALLOFREE

General Madine. Head of Alliance Field Operations. Go on.

PLOOVO

Well, it seems that this General has struck a deal with the Hutts: a secret hyperlane into Hutt space, some supplies, even a starship or three. In return, the Hutts want a lot of money and their favorite smuggler out of jail. They also wanted reassurance that this would happen. Madine gave up Endigo's name to Ah-Kibosh the Hutt, which satisfied them.

SNAG

Ah-Kibosh's helping the Rebels, but he offers us Endigo?

PLOOVO

He's a Hutt.

SNAG

Good point.

PLOOVO

He figures his deal's still on whether
you scratch one Rebel or not.

MON GALLOFREE

All right, Ploovo. Get that spice here
to me at Coruscant.

PLOOVO

Yes, your lordship.

Ploovo winks out. Gallofree looks up to the Yuzzem.

SNAG

Want me to find some goons near Kessel,
Mon Gal?

MON GALLOFREE

Nah. Endigo would kill them.

(smirking)

Combine built him good.

SNAG

This Ploovo-Two-For-One's getting on
your last nerve, Mon Gal. And his Hutt,
too. Spice, it's making your mind a
map.

MON GALLOFREE

We don't worry about them. And Endigo's
icing.

Mon Gallofree heads back to the war machine. He flips on
the soldering torch, and puts his blastshield helmet back
on. He takes the helmet off again and grabs his drink from
the nearby pit droid.

MON GALLOFREE (CONT'D)

(after swallowing)

You do realize how much the Empire
would pay for Titus Mede, don't you?

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - BRIDGE

Admiral Mede looks out into the stars, his jaw firmly set.
Captain Destri rushes in.

DESTRI

They're in trouble.

EXT. SURFACE OF KESSEL - SALT FLATS - INDETERMINATE TIME

Two covered repulsor sleds, tied together by a length of syntherope, ROAR across the now-calm surface of Kessel. Endigo and company are on the lead sled, Bre at the controls. They have their scavenger uniforms and goggles back on, but their oxygen masks are slung around their necks. HALLON NAIN, dusty and wan-faced but handsome, sits between two Rebel Commandos. His hands are still in binders.

The Rebels are pursued by a large Ubrikkian Cargo Skiff, its deck full of firing stormtroopers.

Bre guns it over an embankment, and the covered sleds BANG HARD onto salt flats. The combined weight of the two sleds are too much for the repulsor fields. Hulda stumbles across Endigo's lap, getting back up just as a blaster bolt RIPS through the sled's coverings, EXPLODING near the controls.

BRE

(looking back, mad)

Had to bring the Bantha!

HULDA CAULP

Hey, waitaminnit, you just--

ENDIGO

Shut up and find out what the hell is
taking Skatuhl so long.

Blaster bolts EXPLODE along the ground next to the tethered sleds. A CLOUD OF SILT AND SAND ERUPTS.

HULDA CAULP

Right.

Two-Tau is disassembled again, being too big to fit into the repulsor sled with the rest of the Rebel Commandos. His head looks up at Endigo from the center of the floor.

TWO-TAU'S HEAD

Neht kay roth-ra!

ENDIGO

We went over this. You're too big to fit in here.

Endigo motions for REBEL COMMANDO ONE to follow him.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)

Come on.

The two make their way to the sled behind, JUMPING across the gap. Endigo has to catch Rebel Commando One by the arm as he slips.

FOLLOW THEM past the MOANING Bantha and to the back end of the second repulsor sled. They take cover behind the sled's railing. Rebel Commando One raises a little and opens fire.

Endigo ignites his lightsaber. He stands up and tries to deflect the incoming fire, but he misses every shot. A blast hits him on an armored shoulder, A SMALL EXPLOSION. Endigo falls to the floor, looking at Rebel Commando One.

ENDIGO

Never got that far, okay?

PULL BACK to see the chase. A great shadow appears over their Cargo Skiff. A few stormtroopers look up into the RISING HAZE OF A SMALL SALT CLOUD.

STORMTROOPER POV: staring straight up at a Cargo-Freighter, its bays wide open. Several bombs drop from the *Strommel*. THE SCREEN GOES WHITE as everything around it EXPLODES.

PULL BACK to see the *Strommel* passing over the black smoking remains of the Ubrikkian Skiff to lower itself in front of the two covered repulsor sleds. The Cargo-Freighter's bays close as its rear loading ramp descends.

SKATUHL (V.O.)

Slaaka slaaka.

Bre carefully maneuvers the two repulsor sleds into the *Strommel*.

EXT. SPACE - NEAR KESSEL - ON THE *STROMMEL*

as the Cargo-Freighter jumps into hyperspace.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - BRIDGE

Admiral Mede moves to the turbolift elevators. They SWISH open, revealing Hallon Nain, cleaned-up but still shackled, between two security officers.

Hallon is shocked to see Mede, and takes a few steps back.

HALLON

You..?

MEDE

Yes, Hallon. It's a hard thing to change, one's loyalty. Let's go talk about it in your detention cell, shall we?

Captain Destri looks over from a command station.

DESTRI

Madine's requesting a report on the prisoner transfer.

Mede steps into the turbolift elevator, turning his back to Hallon.

MEDE

Tell the General we are proceeding to the drop-off point.

Destri goes back to the command station. Mede presses a button on the elevator console to stop its doors from closing.

MEDE (CONT'D)

Captain?

DESTRI

Yes, sir?

MEDE

Inform the General that the prisoner
was somewhat damaged during the
jailbreak.

The elevator doors close.

EXT. HUTT SPACE - ON NAR SHADAA

as the pleasure moon orbits the vastness of Nal Hutta.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - URBAN SPRAWL - NIGHT

The urban sprawl of Nar Shadaa is a bottomless valley of
skyscrapers, docking bays, grandly-lit casinos, multi-
leveled shopping centers, enormous factories, fortresses,
Hutt palaces, and clear transparisteel turbolift elevators
running up, down, across, and everywhere— all stretching up
forever, a vertical world.

A Nar Shadaa Air Taxi ZOOMS BY, chugging smoke.

PAN ACROSS to the outdoor balcony platforms of an expensive
restaurant. Long NEON signs hang from the underside of
the balcony platform, the name of the restaurant aglow in
bright red Hutttese.

ON PLOOVO-TWO-FOR-ONE, leaning against the balcony railing
on his chair, drinking and LAUGHING with several other
expensively dressed low-lives. An SE4 Servant Droid waits
nearby, processing their orders.

PLOOVO

(to a painted port tramp)

Ever been to the Corporate Sector,
honey? That's where I usually do
business.

BACK TO MAIN.

A low-life looks up to see three Combine Soldiers
approaching.

PLOOVO (CONT'D)

Tell you the truth, I can't stand Nar
Shadaa. It's just a small version of--

Ploovo is interrupted as his jaw is SMASHED by the rifle-
butt of a Combine Soldier. The Port Tramp and the other
Low Lifes SCOOT their chairs back. The SE4 strolls calmly
away. Another Combine Soldier smacks Ploovo off his chair
onto the floor. The first Combine Soldier lifts Ploovo up,
punches him in the gut, and then grabs him by the neck.

Ploovo is backlit by the red neon signs of the restaurant
as he is forced to lean over the edge of the balcony
railing. He starts to SCREAM but the Combine Soldier
punches him again, knocking the wind out of him. The
balcony platform is now empty except for Ploovo and the
Combine Soldiers.

PLOOVO (CONT'D)

S-stop..!

The third Combine Soldier holds up a golden, circular
portavid for Ploovo to see. Snag appears on the portavid,
smiling, smoking Mon Gallofree's pipe.

PLOOVO (CONT'D)

Okay. All r-right! Anything!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL

Admiral Mede makes his way through the destroyer's
detention level, stopping outside Hallon Nain's cell.
Endigo is present, guarding the door.

Mede looks at Endigo for a long time before he pulls out his hold-out blaster and hands it over. He rolls his sleeves up.

ENDIGO

I can do it, Admiral. I'll make sure
Hallon talks to me.

MEDE

(unbuttoning his collar)
Thank you, Mr. Endigo, but no. I've
done this before, too.

Mede opens the cell and enters. The door closes behind him.
MUFFLED CONVERSTATION within, then a few seconds later: a
LOUD THUD, followed by several POUNDING SOUNDS.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL - INSIDE
HALLON'S CELL

Hallon Nain is on the floor with his back against the wall,
his face busted up and bleeding. His binders aren't on
anymore. He starts to get up but decides not to when he
sees the Admiral's face. Mede's hatred is palpable. Mede
clenches his gloved fists and comes closer to Hallon. The
smuggler wipes the blood from his chin and then tries to
leap up and tackle the Admiral.

THWACK! Mede knocks him to the floor again.

MEDE

Try harder, Hallon. I realize you're a
little weak from the Spice Mine, but
consider my age. Tell me where she is.

HALLON

(coughing)

This won't help you get her back,
Titus. She loves me. You try harder.

Hallon stares at the Admiral defiantly, slowly getting up
to sit on the cold metal slab of the detention cell.

Mede cannot do anymore. He shakes his head silently and
takes a seat next to Hallon. He stares at the opposite
wall. He seems mad at himself for losing his composure.

HALLON (CONT'D)

Anyway, you lost her a long time ago, somewhere between all the 'I'll be in the so-and-so system for only a few months' and the 'Operation: Whatever is taking much longer than I expected, dears.'

MEDE

I warn you, Hallon.

HALLON

And what would you do if you did get her back? Have her join the Rebellion?! You're insane. She's safer with me.

MEDE

You do know where she is, then?

HALLON

Of course I do. Who do you think set this deal up?

MEDE

(looking over)

What?

HALLON

Phelia was the liaison between the Hutts on Nar Shadaa and your, your General Madine or whoever. She and the Hutts have been trying for years to bribe the Empire to get me out of Kessel. The Empire doesn't like to bargain, though.

MEDE

No, they don't. Especially with spice smugglers.

HALLON

Look, Titus. I know some of the things you've done during your tenure with the Imperial Starfleet. You weren't a very nice guy, as the galaxy will recall. Remember the Tapani Expanse? I'm sure they do.

Hallon is really worked up now.

HALLON (CONT'D)

And don't try and make more judgments about me here! You did plenty of that when you disabled my starship and sent me and my crew to Kessel.

(beat)

But I never did thank you for letting that one escape pod get away. And you said the Empire never bargained.

The anger drains from Mede's face.

MEDE

(slowly, unsure)

I was hoping Phelia might—

HALLON

What did you expect her to do? Of course she'd go back to work on Nar Shadaa! Didn't you ever think to look for her there? Or did you feel like looking the other way and letting her get off my ship was a good enough coda to the long, failing drama you'd had with her ever since she was born?

Hallon looks upset with himself after he finishes, either not knowing whether he went too far or wishing he'd done better. Mede has gone back to staring at the opposite wall.

MEDE

No, that wasn't it.

(sighing)

You're right, Hallon. 'Operation: Whatever' was probably just taking much longer than I expected.

Mede rises and exits.

INT. STAR DESTROYER ATONEMENT - HANGAR BAY

Endigo is checking over the Cargo-Freighter *Strommel* in the Atonement's hangar bay. He hears GRUNTS near the rear engines and goes over.

Two-Tau has one of the freighter's massive engine fans held up. Bre is inside the now-accessible engine, straining with something.

ENDIGO

What're you doing in there, kid?

BRE

Wow, have we got major rot up in here from Kessel. Skatuhl wanted me to clean it out. She was complaining that's why it took her so long to get to us.

ENDIGO

Want me to find Hulda to help you?

Bre slides out of the engine and dusts herself off. She motions for Two-Tau to reattach the engine fan.

BRE

He's still mad I yelled at his Bantha.

ENDIGO

You just don't want him to see what you're doing to this thing, do you?

Bre smiles, blows her hair out of her face, and gets back to work on the Cargo-Freighter's exposed power couplings.

BRE

Hulda hates me showing him up. I've managed to increase its speed by thirty--

ENDIGO

I'm sure you have. She's hardly worth the effort, though.

BRE

Yeah, we're talking Clone Wars here.

Endigo starts to exit.

ENDIGO

(over his shoulder)

What can I say? We're broke, and she was cheap.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - NIGHT- ON AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE

glowing in the night in the upper reaches of Nar Shadaa's urban sprawl. An air taxi pulls alongside on the Palace's floating landing bay, letting out four passengers.

Ploovo-Two-For-One and the three Combine Soldiers walk across the landing bay towards the bridge controls. Ploovo walks up to the controls and hits the comlink.

PLOOVO

Ah-Kibosh, I've got your money.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT (V.O.)

Go nahtra?

PLOOVO

Yeah. Already. Mon Gallofree wants this stuff to Coruscant as soon as possible. Let us in. I lost a load at sabaac over at *Ninx's* and need my cut tonight.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT (V.O.)

Bo shay luh-rawlsh!

The bridge extends from the Palace courtyard, connecting to the floating landing bay. Ploovo and the Combine Soldiers begin to cross.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

In the black-and-tan tiled great hall of his palace, Ah-Kibosh the Hutt reclines on a huge hovercouch, smoking something from a long-tubed hookah. ALIEN BODYGUARDS of all species stand guard near Ah-Kibosh, force-pikes and blaster rifles slung across their backs.

PHELIA NAIN, Mede's daughter, young, pretty, but rugged, is also present.

Everyone watches a Pod Race broadcast on a HUGE MULTI-PANELED VIDSCREEN that makes up one side of the great hall. In the corner of the screen is one word repeated in several languages.

At the end of the hall, wide blast door LURCH OPEN. Ah-Kibosh the Hutt looks over to see Ploovo and his Combine escorts, gesturing to the Vidscreen.

 AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
 Ploovo, sud cheska Malastare!

Ploovo-Two-For-One dives for cover.

Immediately, the Combine Soldiers open fire. A few of the Hutt's bodyguards fall dead, while the survivors of the volley unsling their weapons and fire back. Phelia Nain runs to the back of the hall, hiding in the confusion.

COMBINE SOLDIER ONE throws a flash grenade at the remaining bodyguards and looks away.

WHITE OUT. BLASTER FIRE IS HEARD. Bodies THUD to the ground.

ON THE COMBINE SOLDIERS approaching as the WHITE OUT subsides.

PULL BACK to reveal only Ah-Kibosh and one bodyguard left alive. A blaster bolts hit him in the chest, knocking him back. He bounces off the Hutt behind him and to the floor.

 COMBINE SOLDIER ONE
 Set for stun.

A SERIES OF CLICKS as the transition is made.

Ah-Kibosh is bombarded by multiple stun blasts, CIRCULAR BLUE-WHITE ENERGY BANDS that make the Hutt shake like jelly. Ah-Kibosh falls off his hovercouch, his mass SPLATTING on the tiled floor, barely conscious, green slime drooling helplessly from his open mouth. The Hutt tries to say something, but can only GROAN IN PAIN. He rolls onto his back, A SQUISHY SOUND.

COMBINE SOLDIER TWO goes over to the Multi-Paneled Vidscreen's channel port.

Combine Soldier One goes over to the sprawled-out Hutt.

CLICK. Off the stun setting now. He blasts the Hutt in the tail, and more green ooze FIZZLES OUT.

COMBINE SOLDIER ONE
Get up. Look there.

Snag appears on the wall-sized Vidscreen. Beside him is CAPTAIN PELLAEON, of the Imperial Navy. Behind both of them are several Imperial Stormtroopers.

SNAG
Yuzza, Hutt. That's how you work
someone over. Where's Ploovo?

COMBINE SOLDIER ONE
He ran. Figured you didn't need him
anymore.

SNAG
That's fine.
(looking back to the Hutt)
Still here? This is Captain Pellaeon.
Minor name so far, but we all have our
eye on promotion, right?

Pellaeon frowns at the Yuzzem and steps forward.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON
You have made a deal with the
Rebel Alliance, Ah-Kibosh. We know
everything. We know you had Admiral
Mede's strike force break Hallon Nain
out of the Spice Mine of Kessel.

SNAG
And that he's bringing him to a drop-
off point to rejoin the party. You have
three seconds to tell us where that
drop-off point is, Ah-Kibosh.

COMBINE SOLDIER ONE
One.

AH-KIBOSH
Dunchoo.

Ah-Kibosh taps the tile floor, his tongue just lolling out.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT (CONT'D)
Nar Shadaa. Mi puhlooch-ka.

Captain Pellaeon and Snag exchange glances.

SNAG

Your palace. That's convenient.

(to the Combine Soldiers)

Clean the place up. Bacta the Hutt.

Guests soon.

PAN ACROSS to the back of the great hall. Behind a marbled pillar, Phelia Nain hides.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - BRIDGE - HYPERSPACE

Captain Destri stalks the bridge of the *Atonement*, pausing a few times to stare out at the BLUE-WHITE CORRIDOR OF HYPERSPACE.

MEDE (V.O.)

How long until Nar Shadaa, Destri?

DESTRI

ETA in one hour. Endigo is going over tactical now, sir. Subsection eighteen. Sir?

MEDE (V.O.)

Yes, Captain?

DESTRI

Nothing, sir, I'm sorry. Going into Hutt Space. The idea just makes me nervous.

MEDE (V.O.)

I've been there before. Nervousness, I mean, not Nar Shadaa. We should be fine. The Hutts pay well to keep the Empire out of their systems.

DESTRI

Okay, sir. But I have a bad feeling about this.

MEDE (V.O.)

Don't worry, Destri. We'll just drop this scum off and be on our way.

INT. STAR DESTROYER ATONEMENT - BRIEFING ROOM

A vector display of Nar Shadaa WINKS OUT over the briefing room's holoprojector. Endigo and his Commando team, finished with the operation's tactics, rise to get ready. Bre, Two-Tau, Hulda, Nuni, and Skatuhl are present.

ENDIGO

Bre's going to pilot the freighter.

SKATUHL

Sssluk-kut!

ENDIGO

It has nothing to do with Kessel, Skatuhl. Relax. Bre's just made some modifications on the freighter and I-

HULDA CAULP

She has..?

ENDIGO

You don't do dubious well, Hulda. You can check it over before we leave the hangar for the drop point.

(to Skatuhl)

And I want you down there with me anyway, girl. I don't trust the Hutt, no matter what Madine says.

BRE

I'll need a co-pilot for the freighter.

MEDE (O.S.)

You have one.

Mede enters, in civilian garb: a padded gray trench coat, armored vest, baggy pants stuffed into dirty, worn-out black boots.

Everyone just stares.

BRE

But you never leave the ship.

EXT. SPACE - ABOVE CORUSCANT - ON MON GALLOFREE'S SKYHOOK
in orbit above the Galactic Empire's central system.

MON GALLOFREE (V.O.)
And I've hired some locals to fill out
the Combine's forces there.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON (V.O.)
Good.

MON GALLOFREE (V.O.)
Are your starships already in
hyperspace, Captain?

INT. MON GALLOFREE'S SKYHOOK - THRONE ROOM

Mon Gallofree is seated, Snag at his side. They are both
watching Captain Pellaeon on the hovering gilded vidscreen
before them.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON
Three *Imperial*--class Star Destroyers
and Strike Cruiser escorts. Mede will
be going nowhere.

MON GALLOFREE
Endigo's mine.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON
(nodding)
That is fine with the Emperor. He is in
a generous mood today.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - HANGAR BAY - HYPERSPACE

Endigo is waiting near the Cargo-Freighter with Bre and
Hulda. Mede is watching hyperspace go by outside, beyond
the atmosphere field. Two Rebel Officers escort Hallon
Nain, binders on again, into the bay. The smuggler coughs,
Kessel salt still in his lungs, his jaw swollen. Mede turns
to face him. At the Admiral's gesture, the Rebel Officers
unbind Hallon and exit.

Hulda takes a second look at Bre's power coupling enhancements and then ascends the ramp into the *Strommel*.

ENDIGO

(to Mede)

I'll get your daughter out of there,
Admiral.

HALLON

The hell you will.

Endigo looks at Hallon and uses the Force. The smuggler flies across the bay and SLAMS into a nearby wall, upsetting some cargo barrels. The Rebel Officers return to the scene, blasters out.

ENDIGO

(to Hallon)

You say something?

Hallon gets up, scowling.

MEDE

Enough, Mr. Endigo. Get the prisoner
aboard.

BRE

(grabbing Endigo)

Come on, tough guy.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. HUTT SPACE - NEAR NAR SHADAA AND NAL HUTTA

The Star Destroyer *Atonement* has entered into orbit around the moon of Nar Shadaa.

The Cargo-Freighter *Strommel* drops from her bay and engages its sublight engines, speeding toward the moon below.

INT. CARGO-FREIGHTER - ABOVE NAR SHADAA

Mede and Bre sit in the cockpit at the controls of the Cargo-Freighter, watching Nar Shadaa grow closer.

BRE

(smiling)

Been a long time, I bet, since you were hands-on.

Mede says nothing.

BRE (CONT'D)

So, um, what's with this daughter business? You never struck me as, you know, that type.

MEDE

Why not?

BRE

Well, all the- everything. All the-
(imitating Mede's stern countenance)
'Move, people!' and stuff. All that standing stock still on the bridge.

MEDE

I'm a starship officer, Bre.

(sighing)

So was your father. How did he act?

BRE

(suddenly a little mad)

Let's not talk about him.

Mede reads a gauge. Bre can't stand it.

BRE (CONT'D)

What's her name?

MEDE

Phelia.

BRE

What's she like?

Mede finally looks over at her.

MEDE

Your age. Pretty, like you.

(looking back to Nar Shadaa)

That is, before all the spice. I have
no idea what she's like now.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - URBAN SPRAWL - DAWN

FOLLOWING PLOOVO-TWO-FOR-ONE, sneaking through the middle
ghettoes of the urban sprawl of Nar Shadaa. He looks beat
up, scared, and paranoid. He doesn't notice the dark figure
of Phelia Nain shadowing him.

Ploovo goes to the edge of a platform overlooking the
dark industrial canyon below. He hails an AIR TAXI, which
crosses over into the air lane beside him. Ploovo opens the
taxi door.

INT. AIR TAXI - DAWN

Before Ploovo can shut the Air Taxi's door, Phelia JUMPS
IN, a hold-out blaster in her hand.

The RODIAN TAXI DRIVER sees the blaster and motions for
them to get out.

RODIAN TAXI DRIVER

Fehk tawa!

PHELIA

(pointing the blaster at the driver)

Shut up and drive.

The Rodian throws up his hands and drives the air taxi into
a darkened valley between two high-rise towers.

PLOOVO

Look, I'm done with you guys. You can
tell Mon Gallofree--

PHELIA

I'm not with the Combine. I work for
Ah-Kibosh.

PLOOVO

Oh, yeah. Well, I'm done with him, too.
I'm getting the first transport out of
here I can find.

PHELIA

You're a good fixer, Ploovo. I need to
find a subspace radio with broadband
capability. I need to reach someone.
Fast. Then you can get to a transport.

PLOOVO

Sure. Fine. Broadband. At this hour.
(to the driver)
Take us to Wupiupi and 48-slash-208.
Shug Ninx's place.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - DAWN - ON AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE

awash in what light the dawn can reach in the upper urban
sprawl. The Cargo-Freighter sits on the Palace's floating
landing bay, its exhaust ports shooting out a steady gush
of steam. Mon Gallofree's Hired Thugs wait by the bridge,
which is already extended. Mede, Endigo, Hulda, Bre, Two-
Tau, Skatuhl, Hallon Nain, and four Rebel Commandos debark.
The Rebels have no idea that the Hired Thugs don't work for
Ah-Kibosh.

Endigo puts a hand to his transceiver ear.

ENDIGO

All right, Nuni. We should be in and
out. Watch the freighter.

NUNI (V.O.)

Aye-aye, Skip.

Mede holds Hallon by the arm as they approach the Palace
bridge. The Hired Thugs lead the way. Bre looks over into
the city-abyss below until Endigo bumps her awake and
points forward. All present proceed to the Palace.

INT. NINX'S - DAWN

Ploovo and Phelia are in the giant starship repair warehouse of SHUG NINX, an ugly, filthy-looking mechanic. He enters, hydrosponder in hand. The warehouse is full of the carbonized hulks of broken-down freighters, cargo-haulers, snubfighters cannibalized for parts, and assorted other hunks of junk. Other crafts, in similar shape, hang suspended from the warehouse ceiling, most of their hulls exposed to see the engine assemblies and command decks inside.

SHUG NINX
(to Ploovo)

What happened to you?

PHELIA
I need to use one of your subspace radios.

SHUG NINX
(ignoring her)
You got my money, Two-For-One?

Phelia drops a bag of credits into Ninx's hand. A big bag of credits. Shug looks from it to Ploovo. Ploovo shrugs.

PHELIA
Radio. Now.

SHUG NINX
Inna back, sweetheart.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - DAWN

Ah-Kibosh the Hutt, feeling better and back on his hovercouch, greets the Rebels in his great hall. The Hired Thugs casually take up positions around the Rebels. Mede allows Hallon to step forward.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
Hallon! Cheska so rupa.

HALLON
Thanks, Kib, it's good to be back.

AH-KIBOSH THE HUTT
Domo rhet non Kessel?

Hallon smiles and shrugs. Endigo sidles over to Mede.

ENDIGO
(whispering)
I don't see any daughters.

Mede doesn't respond. He approaches the Hutt.

MEDE
We're done here, Ah-Kibosh. You have
your smuggler back, now where—

The gigantic Multi-Paneled Vidscreen COMES TO LIFE: Captain
Pellaeon.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON
(looking Mede over)
Slumming, Admiral?

Everyone pulls out blasters.

Combine Soldiers come out from behind the great hall's
pillars and level their own weapons. Hallon looks confused,
and backs up from Ah-Kibosh.

The Rebels form a loose circle around the smuggler.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON (CONT'D)
This was unexpected. I had hoped you'd
be aboard the *Atonement* when my--

AH-KIBOSH
(to Hallon, apologetic)
Baht chukopska, Hallon.

BRE
Um.

Mon Gallofree and Snag APPEAR beside Captain Pellaeon.
Skatuhl sees them and GROWLS.

MON GALLOFREE
Shen.

SNAG

You get around, boy. New arm, too. We
coulda got you a better one, you know.
By the way, jammed your transceiver.

Endigo ignores the Yuzzem and concentrates.

ENDIGO

(eyes closed)

Nuni, get out of the freighter.

INT. CARGO-FREIGHTER - OUTSIDE PALACE - DAWN

Nuni looks up from the cockpit's control deck.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - DAWN

Endigo tries to contact Nuni again.

ENDIGO

(eyes closed)

Get out of the freighter, Nuni.

SNAG

There he goes--

(closes his eyes and concentrates)

--liiisten to meeee.

MON GALLOFREE

Freighter's gone, Shen.

INT. CARGO-FREIGHTER - OUTSIDE PALACE - DAWN

Inside the Cargo-Freighter, the cockpit is empty.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - PALACE LANDING BAY - DAWN

Nuni bolts out of the Cargo-Freighter, looking beneath it
as she runs. Remote Mines are strewn beneath the starship,
BLINKING GREEN.

RED.

The Mines EXPLODE, VAPORIZING the Cargo-Freighter in a BALL OF FIRE and RIPPING THE LANDING BAY INTO PIECES. These fall FLAMING into the urban sprawl below. Nuni is prone on the broken edge of the extended bridge and covered in debris. She looks up to see BURNING WRECKAGE plummet DOWN AND OUT OF VIEW.

INT. NINX'S - DAWN

Phelia steps out from the back of Shug Ninx's colossal starship repair facility. Ploovo is gone. Phelia finds Shug and throws him another bag of credits.

PHELIA
(looking up)

Thanks for the broadband. Now, Mr. Ninx, which one of these things actually runs?

SHUG NINX
(counting the credits)
Custom *Mobquet* Medium Hauler, upper right. Quiet ship, called *Starlight Intruder*. Faster than goodness sakes. Not enough here, though. You're strictly going rental.

EXT. HUTT SPACE - NEAR NAR SHADAA AND NAL HUTTA

The ISD *Atonement* is engaged with several other Imperial Star Destroyers above the moon of Nar Shadaa. She is taking a severe beating, EXPLOSIONS ERUPTING ALL ALONG HER HULL. The Imperial Strike Cruisers are hanging back, dealing with the *Atonement's* starfighters, both modified TIEs and Townowi Z-95 Headhunters.

Z-95 HEADHUNTER PILOT (V.O.)
Screen four is dusted, Captain. We've got to get out of here.

DESTRI (V.O.)
Negative, Headhunter. Stay on those Strike Cruisers. You've got the Admiral's Intel reports on them. Find the weakness he was talking about.

A wing of modified TIEs are BLOWN APART by crisscrossing turbolaser fire.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - BRIDGE

The *Atonement's* bridge is at full alert: WARNING LIGHTS ARE GOING OFF EVERYWHERE, KLAXON ALARMS ARE SCREAMING.

Captain Destri watches the battle outside helplessly as BRIDGE OFFICERS SCRAMBLE all around her.

A Bridge Officer looks up from a communications station.

BRIDGE OFFICER

General Madine on the line, Captain.

DESTRI

General?

MADINE

Where's Mede? My contact on Nar Shadaa said that he is trapped at the drop-point with the others. That the Combine and the Empire got there first somehow.

DESTRI

She's right.

MADINE

Why is he down there at all, Captain?!

DESTRI

He wants to bring his daughter back from the-

(breaking down)

NEVER MIND ALL THAT, GENERAL! How the hell are we supposed to get out of this?!

MADINE

Jump into hyperspace, Captain.

DESTRI

No way, General. I'm not--

MADINE

That's an order, Destri. Mede can find another way off Nar Shadaa. I'm sending some reinforcements to help him, but they won't get there in time to save the *Atonement*.

Z-95 HEADHUNTER PILOT (V.O.)

I'm with the General on this one, Captain.

Destri bites her lower lip and takes a final look outside at Nar Shadaa.

DESTRI

(beaten)

All fighters, return to the destroyer.
We're moving out.

EXT. HUTT SPACE - NEAR NAR SHADAA AND NAL HUTTA

Abandoning the battle above Nar Shadaa, the *Atonement* shifts its position and blasts into hyperspace.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - DAWN

In the great hall of Ah-Kibosh's Palace, the Rebels are surrounded by Hired Thugs and Combine Soldiers.

Captain Pellaeon looks over from an OFF-SCREEN monitor.

CAPTAIN PELLAEON

Put down your weapons, Mede. The
Atonement just went into hyperspace.

Mede looks over to Endigo and nods. The Rebels drop their blasters, all except for Endigo, who raises his blaster rifle into the air.

MON GALLOFREE

Shen, come on. I want you alive.

CLICKS all around him from the enemy.

ENDIGO

Now. I'm going to fire this once--

He spins and BLOWS A HOLE INTO THE VIDSCREEN. Through the hole of the dead Vidscreen, a REDDISH RAY OF SUNLIGHT appears, that section exposed to the dawn outside.

The shards of the Vidscreen BREAK LIKE GLASS on the tiled floor.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)

--just to shut them up. And now I'm going to surrender.

Endigo drops his blaster rifle. Bre looks at him and shakes her head.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - URBAN SPRAWL - SUNRISE

Outside, in the urban sprawl of Nar Shadaa.

ON AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE, a large hole blasted out of one wall. The *Starlight Intruder* RISES OUT of the lower levels of the city and INTO VIEW.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - SUNRISE

The Hired Thugs move closer to the Rebels and Hallon Nain.

COMBINE SOLDIER ONE

Get their blasters.

Two-Tau's handcannons start to vibrate, rise, and WHINE, but Bre pushes them back down.

BRE

Not now.

TWO-TAU
(nodding)

Nichi.

The Hired Thugs retrieve all the blasters from the floor. Hired Thug One reaches for Skatuhl's blaster nervously. He looks up at the fang-bared face of the Barabel.

Skatuhl looks down at Hired Thug One and HISSES, her tail twitching.

ENDIGO

Easy, Skats.

MEDE

(whispering to Hallon)

I'm still watching you.

HALLON

Like I'm going anywhere, Titus.

Ah-Kibosh is sprawled on his hovercouch. A light BLINKS on his armrest. He presses it and pulls a corded comlink up to his head.

PHELIA (V.O.)

Kib, look outside the hole.

TRACK WITH AH-KIBOSH as he spies the Custom *Mobquet* Medium Hauler blocking the sunrise.

AH-KIBOSH

(whispering)

Shetno qwatra, Phelly ghee.

PHELIA (V.O.)

I see you, too. I need to know who's
who and where they're at.

(looking into a console)

Gimme a comscan of the room.

Ah-Kibosh taps out a few commands into the armrest of his hovercouch.

INT. *STARLIGHT INTRUDER* - SUNRISE

In the cockpit of the *Starlight Intruder*, Phelia watches the Hutt's comscan report COME ALIVE on her visual sensors.

A diagonal representation of the great hall forms, along with various low-tech graphical displays of those life forms inside.

One by one the life forms become COLOR CODED.

Phelia grabs the gun mount.

PHELIA

Intruder.

INT. AH-KIBOSH'S PALACE - GREAT HALL - SUNRISE

Capital ship-scale blaster bolts RIP through the Palace's Vidscreen wall and into the great hall. Each blast VAPORIZES a Combine Soldier or a Hired Thug.

The Rebels duck as more Vidscreen shards rain down around them. Mede is too close to another blast and spins across the broken tiles to his back, a wide gash in his armored vest. Hallon is prone beside him.

Two-Tau whirls about on his torso axis, blasting away.

Skatuhl launches herself at Hired Thug One, who has her blaster.

BEHIND HIRED THUG ONE as the Barabel's fangs CRUNCH into his neck.

Another blast from the *Starlight Intruder* BOMBARDS the Palace floor.

A BRIEF WHITE OUT that clears to reveal a debris-covered Combine Soldier One.

Mede, wounded and GROANING, nevertheless grabs Hallon's leg, who is trying to crawl away.

MEDE

Not until you tell me where she is,
Hallon.

Hallon rolls over to his back and points outside to the *Starlight Intruder*.

HALLON

Maybe it's just a guess.

Combine Soldier One, dusty but alive, rises and levels his blaster rifle at Mede's back.

HALLON (CONT'D)

Mede!

Hulda blasts Combine Soldier One. Bre rushes over, holding her hand out to the Admiral. He takes it and rises to his feet. Mede looks down at Hallon. He helps the smuggler up.

The bridge doors to the Palace open, FLOODING the great hall with MORE LIGHT. Nuni stands in the doorway, wounded, trying to raise her heavy blaster. A Hired Thug spots her and takes aim.

A WARPING SOUND and A FLASH OF LIGHTSABER and the Hired Thug falls. Endigo points to Hulda and the open doors.

BRE

(to Mede)

Can I say it?

MEDE

(managing a smile)

Of course.

BRE

Move, people!

The Rebels start to exit, leaving Ah-Kibosh the Hutt as sole witness to all the dead.

EXT. NAR SHADAA - PALACE LANDING BAY BRIDGE- SUNRISE

The *Starlight Intruder* has lowered its side cargo doors to the edge of the broken landing bay bridge.

Phelia Nain helps the Rebels inside one by one. She has to back up to let Two-Tau in. When she reappears she sees the last stragglers: Hallon Nain helping her father across the bridge. She breaks out into a sobbing smile. Mede and Hallon make it to the cargo door.

PHELIA

Hi, Daddy.

MEDE

Hi, baby.

Hallon moves away to let them embrace. Over her father's shoulder, Phelia looks at Hallon and smiles wider. Her men are back.

INT. *STARLIGHT INTRUDER* - SPACE

Phelia and Hallon are at the cockpit controls of the *Starlight Intruder*. Mede, Bre, and Endigo are behind them. The *Starlight Intruder* is headed straight for the remains of the Imperial fleet: three Star Destroyers, their Strike Cruiser escorts, and a complement of TIE Fighters.

PHELIA

Three Imp SD's and--

HALLON

(interrupting smoothly)
--four Carracks, looks like.

PHELIA

The fighters are forming a screen to intercept.

Bre looks up to Mede. The Admiral is obviously proud of his daughter's calm response to the danger at hand. Bre looks jealous for a second, but a WARNING SOUND breaks her out of it.

HALLON

This is bad, sweetheart. We got no hole to jump.

Suddenly, a wave of Rebel X-Wing fighters POUR INTO VIEW and open fire. The TIE Fighters break formation.

X-WING FIGHTER PILOT (V.O.)

Red Ten here. Sorry we're late.

Mede leans over and presses the comlink.

MEDE

I'm the late one, Red Ten. We appreciate the help.

HALLON

We're all clear.

PHELIA

Punch it.

The stars outside STRETCH INTO THIN BEAMS OF LIGHT as the *Starlight Intruder* makes the jump to hyperspace.

EXT. SPACE - UNKNOWN SECTOR

Rebel repair ships are working on the damaged *Atonement*. The *Starlight Intruder* is docked with her.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

Mede and his daughter are in his quarters aboard the *Atonement*. The room is red-draped and lined with shelves filled with trinkets and trophies from his illustrious career, including the head of an old droid. Phelia studies the red drapes.

PHELIA

These are from Chandrila.

MEDE

(sitting)

Home.

PHELIA

I guess so.

She looks around the room some more.

PHELIA (CONT'D)

Strangely no pictures of mom or me.

MEDE

Hit the button on top of the droid's head.

Phelia does so. The droid's eyes PROJECT a holographic family portrait on a nearby glass table. Mede's daughter smiles.

PHELIA

What was this droid's name?

MEDE
I don't remember, either.

A TRILLING SOUND announces a visitor at the door.

MEDE
Come in.

Destri enters. She is startled to see Phelia.

DESTRI
I'll come back at another time,
Admiral.

MEDE
Go ahead, Destri. What is it?

DESTRI
I just wanted to apologize for
abandoning you at Nar Shadaa.

MEDE
You were following orders, Captain.
Madine was right. You couldn't have
done anything to help us.

Captain Destri considers this, frowns, and turns on her heel.

MEDE (CONT'D)
Captain?

DESTRI
(turning back)
Yessir.

MEDE
Thank you for saving our ship.

INT. STAR DESTROYER ATONEMENT - HANGAR BAY

Admiral Mede, Phelia, and Hallon are all gathered in front of the *Starlight Intruder*. Endigo, Destri, and Bre watch from behind. Phelia hugs her father. Hallon shakes his hand. Mede doesn't let go.

MEDE

I can't stop her from going. But you know how--

HALLON

We return the *Starlight Intruder* to Shug Ninx and then we disappear.

MEDE

(letting go of his hand)
No spice. No Hutts.

HALLON

She'll be safe. I promise you.

The two move to the *Starlight Intruder*. Hallon enters, but Phelia turns around.

PHELIA

Dad, when I contacted the Rebellion for this whole deal, General Madine had no idea who I was.

(beat)

In case you were wondering.

MEDE

I wasn't. The General and I know each other only by reputation.

PHELIA

I guess what I'm saying is that we were pretty lucky he gave the job to you.

MEDE

I volunteered. I wanted you to get you back and--

(beat)

--and I honestly don't know what else.

The *Starlight Intruder's* sublight engines FLARE UP.

MEDE (CONT'D)

(suddenly)

'Duck.' You named it 'Duck.'

PHELIA

The droid.

MEDE
Right.

PHELIA
(beat)
Dumb name.

MEDE
You were four.

Phelia hesitates. Mede starts to say more but, before he can, his daughter enters the hold of the *Starlight Intruder*.

Slowly it descends out of the bay. Mede watches until it speeds away OUT OF VIEW.

Mede turns around and rejoins his crewmates.

IRIS OUT.

THE END